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Bulletin

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LOUISIANA
LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

15, No. 2

Spring, 1952

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THE BULLETIN

of the

LOUISIANA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

VOLUME 15

NUMBER 2

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not necessarily the opinion or the policy of the editorial board.

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The Editor Speaks Again

Let's discontinue the *Bulletin*! The suggestion has been made that it might be wise to do so, and pool resources with the South-western states to publish a regional library journal. Under the plan, state associations would either discontinue their journals or issue a newsletter publication, probably in mimeographed form.

Why change? First, the rising cost of publishing is draining the treasury of the states which issue their bulletins, and secondly, several people believe that one journal devoted to the profession will be quite adequate for the region. Others believe that a newsletter type of publication within the state, issued monthly or oftener, will be a better instrument for the association than a quarterly publication.

What do you think?

Of course you will be given an opportunity to express yourself before a decision is made. Why not write a letter to the Editor and express your point of view?

With this issue we begin the first of the histories of Louisiana libraries. Our apologies for beginning with two New Orleans libraries, but these are the only histories available by publication time. Others will appear subsequently. We hope that you will enjoy them. And speaking of histories, all Louisiana libraries will wish to secure copies of Joe W. Kraus's *William Beer and the New Orleans Libraries, 1891-1927*. You remember Joe of course. He was formerly Assistant Librarian at Tulane, and he has made a permanent contribution to the profession by his monograph on Mr. Beer, a pioneer Louisiana librarian.

The Twenty-sixth Conference Louisiana Library Association

Miss Evelyn Peters, President, convened the Conference on Thursday, March 13, in the Washington-Youree Hotel, Shreveport. The keynote address of the first general session was an inspiring one by Miss Margaret V. Girdner, Head, Bureau of Texts and Libraries, San Francisco Unified School District, whose subject was "The American Heritage," which incidentally was also the theme of the conference.

Mr. Grieg Aspnes, President of the Special Libraries Association, who was scheduled to talk on "The Other Part of Librarianship" did not arrive in Shreveport until Friday because of illness.

At the second general session, Mrs. Grace T. Stevenson, Director, American Heritage Project, American Library Association, gave a very clear presentation of "The American

Heritage Project of the American Library Association." This was followed by an address by Dr. T. Harry Williams, Professor of History at Louisiana State University and author of *Lincoln and His Generals*, Book-of-the-Month selection for March 1952, who spoke on "Abraham Lincoln and the American Heritage."

The Book Dinner was held Friday, March 14, with Dr. Garland Taylor presiding. Miss Essae M. Culver announced the winners of the Modisette Award. In the public library field the winner was the Winn Parish Library of which Mrs. Rubie Hanks is Librarian. The award was accepted by Mr. Ovey Trahan of Winnfield, Chairman of the Library Board.

The Natchitoches High School, Agnes Clark, Librarian, received the school division

award at the 1951 Louisiana Education Association Convention.

Dr. Eugene P. Watson, Librarian, Northwestern State College, Natchitoches, and Chairman of the Literary Award Committee, presented a plaque to Mr. Robert Tallant, author of *The Pirate Lafitte and the Battle of New Orleans*, which was selected by the committee as the 1951 winner of the award.

Mr. John Edwin Canady (Matthew Head), Director of the School of Art, Newcomb College, Tulane University, and author of Inner Sanctum novels, entertained the audience with an address on "Mystery Stories—Why They Read Them and Why I Write Them."

The feature of the third general session was an address by Miss Doris Gates, Children's Librarian and author of books for children, on "Children's Books in a Fugitive World."

Mr. Edmon Low, President, Southwestern Library Association, brought greetings from the Southwestern Library Association, and urged attendance at the forthcoming conference to be held in Mexico City the week of November 23, 1952.

The following officers were elected at the business session:

Dr. Garland Taylor, New Orleans, President; Miss Vivian Cazayoux, Baton Rouge, First Vice-President; Mrs. Will deGrummond, Baton Rouge, Second Vice-President; Miss Laura Leche, Marrero, Treasurer; Miss Ruth Clark, Lake Charles, Secretary; Mrs. Ora Garland, Natchitoches, Parliamentarian.

Other business transacted was the dissolution of the Special Committee on Cooperation with the Southwestern Library Association, and a Resolution requesting support of the State Library Program for a new building.

The four sections held meetings with appropriate programs.

The Louisiana Chapter of the Special Libraries Association, of which Mrs. Dorothy B. Skau is President, met with the Louisiana Library Association and held a luncheon meeting on Friday with Mr. Grieg Aspnes as guest speaker.

Miss Bess Vaughan and her Committee on Arrangements received the congratulations of all visitors for their splendid hospitality and carefully laid plans for the smooth running convention.

New Orleans Public Library In the Nineteenth Century¹

The charge of a lack of literary culture, which has often been brought against Louisianians in the early days of their American existence, is exaggerated. The truth is there were quite a number of private libraries, booksellers and circulating libraries in New Orleans in the first part of the nineteenth century. Books were sold, before there was any bookseller as such. General importers, a school master, importers of dry goods and merchandise, and newspaper proprietors handled books occasionally.

From 1804 onward New Orleans was pro-

vided with subscription libraries. State and city governments, organizations and philanthropic individuals took an active interest in the establishment and promotion of these libraries. They were sometimes supported for considerable periods by extraneous attractions. "One of them existed for three or four years on the profits incidental to the loan of the library room for exhibition games of chess, in which Morphy and other dis-

¹ The material of this paper is from the thesis of Helen Maestri, presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of M.A. at Tulane University, July, 1943.

tinguished local and foreign amateurs took part."²

Many of the early libraries failed. But they were always replaced by new ones. In one instance several combined to form the existing New Orleans Public Library. The brief descriptions of these early libraries, given below, will attempt to show the conditions under which the New Orleans Public Library came into being.

NEW ORLEANS LIBRARY SOCIETY, 1806-1830

The New Orleans Library Society was created by the Library Society Act and aided by the University Act. Both of these statutes were passed by the Territorial Legislature in 1805. The latter set up a system of parish academies, the system to be crowned by a university in New Orleans. The act provided for libraries consisting of approved works in French and English for every parish. The former act incorporated the New Orleans Library Society, which was to be assisted by the university funds.

The Library Society was a stock or subscription company. Anyone could become a member by purchasing one or more shares of stock at twenty-five dollars each or by giving instead maps, charts, or books which the trustees deemed to be equal in value to the cash subscription price.

The Library Society had a precarious existence. One of the serious difficulties that befell it was a fire that broke out on July 1, 1810. Finally, financial troubles caused the failure of the Library Society. In February, 1830, the sheriff sold 1,497 French volumes, 1,901 English books, one pair of large globes and four bookcases.

TOURO FREE LIBRARY SOCIETY, 1824—(circa) 1834

Five years before the New Orleans Library Society was sold out by the sheriff, the Free Library Society of New Orleans was founded and incorporated on April 10, 1824. "Was it a 'spite' enterprise, founded to satisfy

some grudge against the older Library Society? Was it, on the other hand, started because the older society had failed to fulfill its proper function?"³ The answers to these questions are not forthcoming. But the fact that two of the original trustees of the New Orleans Library Society were among the incorporators of the Free Library Society of New Orleans may have some bearing on these questions.

At the time of its incorporation the Free Library Society had about 1000 volumes, which were housed in the basement of the Presbyterian church. Membership was granted upon the payment of five dollars or books equal to that amount. But any person could have the use of the library gratis.

This society later became known as the Touro Free Library Society in honor of Judah Touro, who had donated funds for the erection of a building. A home for the library, however, was never built. It is safe to assume that the Touro Library Society had ceased to exist in 1834, as an announcement in one of the local newspapers urges the citizens to patronize the unique and newly organized Commercial Library, "this being the only institution of the kind in New Orleans."⁴

NEW ORLEANS LAW LIBRARY SOCIETY, 1828 TO 20TH CENTURY

The New Orleans Law Library Society was incorporated on March 17, 1828, and its five commissioners received subscriptions for capital stock of the society which consisted of an unlimited number of shares of \$100 each. "The governor of the state was authorized to give to the library 1 copy each of the revised Civil Code, the Code of Practice. Martin's Digest, Chrysty's Digest, the acts of the legislature, and every code or book of jurisprudence, laws of the United States and of the several states of the Union, forwarded to the secretary of state of Louisiana each

² William Beer, "History of Libraries Covers Period of Many Years," *Daily States*, August 31, 1901, p. 25.

³ Roger Philip McCutcheon, "Libraries in New Orleans, 1771-1833," *Louisiana Historical Quarterly*, XX, 1937, 157.

⁴ *Argus*, April 12, 1834.

year."⁵ In 1909 this library contained 18,000 volumes. It is not in existence today. The causes of its failure and the disposal of its books are matters that require further research.

STATE LAW LIBRARY, 1833 TO DATE

The State Law Library was founded in 1833 according to a resolution of the legislature authorizing a library for the two branches of the legislature. It received \$1500 to purchase books dealing with politics, history, general science, and useful works of reference. In 1846 it contained 3,000 volumes, "including a folio copy of Audubon's Ornithology, Dinon's Egypt, Humboldt's Travels and Musée Français."⁶ Today its 80,000 books are housed at the New Court House Building on Royal Street in New Orleans.

PUBLIC SCHOOL LYCEUM AND LIBRARY SOCIETY, 1844-1896

The name of the Public School Lyceum and Library Society is misleading. Like all its predecessors, it was a subscription or semi-public library; but, unlike any of them, it was the first to serve children. The Public School Library was founded on an ordinance submitted to the Council of Municipality No. Two⁷ by Samuel Jarvis Peters and adopted by that body on December 3, 1844.

This ordinance provided that the cost of the library should be defrayed by the voluntary contributions of the students of the public schools. The most each pupil could give was twenty-five cents a month or three dollars a year. After he had paid nine dollars he was granted life membership.

Any citizen was privileged to use the Public School Library by paying annually five dollars. Many undoubtedly subscribed, because more than half of the titles in the two

unique catalogues of this library, one published in 1848 and the other in 1856, were intended for adults. In addition to their subscriptions, several citizens donated books or generous sums of money.

In his ordinance S. J. Peters had provided for the erection of a building; these plans never materialized, as the Public School Library was always housed in the City Hall.

His provisions for a system of public lectures met with much more success. This same ordinance provided that \$1,000 was to be invested in books each year and that at least one half of the annual income thereafter must be used for purchasing "chemical and philosophical apparatus"⁸ and for securing lecturers.

Several distinguished speakers were invited, the most noteworthy of whom was William Makepeace Thackeray.

The success of the Public School Library of the Second Municipality was contagious. Shortly after its founding, the First and Third Municipalities established their own libraries. On March 18, 1859, seven years after the consolidation of the city of New Orleans, the libraries of these municipalities were united. The collection was hereafter referred to as the City Library until 1896, when it was consolidated with the Fisk Free and Public Library to form the existing New Orleans Public Library.

YOUNG MEN'S FREE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION, circa 1846-?

The Young Men's Free Library Association probably came into existence about 1846, as in that year the following reference was made about it, "This is a new institution."⁹ It had in 1846 2,000 books and "files of papers from all parts of the Union."¹⁰ Among its trustees, were some prominent New Orleanians.

⁸ *Catalogue of the Library of the Lyceum and Library Society, First District, City of New Orleans*, New Orleans, 1858, Preface, p. iii.

⁹ *De Bow's Review*, I, 1846, 382.

¹⁰ *Loc. cit.*

⁵ Alcee Fortier, ed. *Louisiana*, Atlanta, 1909, II, 67.

⁶ *De Bow's Review*, I, 1846, 381.

⁷ To engender peace between the Creoles and the Americans, New Orleans was divided in 1836 into three municipalities—each governed by an autonomous board. The City Council was drafted from the three boards and was presided over by the Mayor.

MERCANTILE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION OF NEW ORLEANS, 1857-?

The Mercantile Library Association was incorporated on August 14, 1857. Its first annual report stated that the Library contained 3,485 volumes and eighty-five newspapers and periodicals. Further study of the available data will make this society better known than it is today.

HOWARD MEMORIAL LIBRARY, 1889 TO DATE

This library came into existence through the donations of Miss Annie T. Howard, who desired to erect a memorial to her father. She gave to a board of trustees \$200,000, 8,000 books and a building, the cost of which was estimated at \$115,000. The main object of this library is to provide a place where information on all subjects, especially on Louisiana, can be preserved and made accessible to the public. Toward the accomplishment of this purpose the Howard Memorial Library has compiled an excellent collection of early documents pertaining to the colonial history of Louisiana. In 1941 the Howard Memorial Library moved into the new Howard-Tilton Memorial Library building of Tulane University, where it is now housed. It is still available to the general public.

OTHER LIBRARIES IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

The following organizations had libraries large enough to be listed in city directories or to be mentioned in histories of Louisiana:

Academy of Sciences
Art Gallery of the Southern Art Union
Artists' Association
Business Woman's Exchange
Catholic Institute
Christian Woman's Exchange
Hebrew Young Men's Library Association
King's Daughters
Louisiana Historical Society
Louisiana Society of Naturalists

Louisiana State Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
Metairie Cemetery Association
New Orleans Medical Library
Tulane University
Woman's Christian Temperance Union
Young Men's Christian Association

NEW ORLEANS COMMERCIAL LIBRARY SOCIETY, 1831-1842

AND

FISK FREE AND PUBLIC LIBRARY, 1854-1896

The seed for the New Orleans Public Library was planted with the founding of the New Orleans Commercial Library Society, which on March 29, 1831, established "a library approximating in its aims and conduct to the conditions of a public library."¹¹ Its founders were young men "restricted in means . . . and recipients simply of meager salaries, as accountants and clerks."¹² They always managed to provide a central location in the business district for the library and maintain the hours, 9 A.M.-9 P.M., which are those of the New Orleans Public Library today.

The reasonable fees of the Commercial Library could have excluded only the poorest. The initiation fee and the annual dues were each five dollars. Life membership could be secured for fifty dollars. In 1837 the initiation fee was abolished and the dues were raised to ten dollars, except for clerks and apprentices, who were taxed only five dollars.

A unique copy of the *Catalogue of the Books and Periodicals of the N. O. Commercial Library and Reading Room*, found at the New Orleans Public Library, reveals that the Commercial Library was not as mercantile as its name indicated. In 1838 its collection of 4622 books was similar to one of a public library. Eminent works of distinguished writers had been provided for serious patrons, as well as popular books of the day of the general reader. The largest class was that of fiction; biography ranked sec-

¹¹ Charles Patton Dimitry, "Public Libraries of New Orleans," newspaper clipping in "Louisiana Scrapbook" (New Orleans Public Library) I, 123.

¹² *Loc. cit.*

ond. There were more books in the field of literature, history, philosophy and travel than there were in law, commerce, politics, science and the useful arts. Among the 803 French books, owned by the Commercial Library, there was the same proportion in the subject fields as existed among the English books.

The list of twenty-one periodicals, to which the Commercial Library subscribed, was a comprehensive one, with emphasis, however, on literary matters. The field of literature was better represented than any other class. It comprised three outstanding British periodicals, *Blackwood's Magazine*, *Edinburgh Review* and *Westminster Review*, and five noteworthy American ones, *American Monthly Magazine*, *Gentleman's Magazine*, *Knickerbocker Magazine*, *New York Mirror* and *North American Review*. The fields of medicine, religion, political history, science, and business were each represented by only one periodical; namely, *American Journal of the Medical Sciences*; *Advocate of Moral Reform*, *Niles' Weekly Register*, *American Journal of Sciences and Arts* and *Rail Road Journal*. There was a magazine for the French patrons, *Courrier des Etats-Unis*, and also one for the women, *Lady's Book*.

Modern librarians will be horrified to know that the Commercial Library allowed its bound periodicals to circulate, but they may be pleased to learn that, even in these ante-bellum days, books had been selected for the ladies. The collection, however, was quite inferior, as we see from the titles in the Catalogue:

Astronomy for Young Ladies
The Artist or Young Ladies Instructor in Drawing
The Coquette
Divorced
Female Scripture Biography
Letters to Young Ladies by Mrs. Phillips
Recollections of a Chaperon
Three Eras of Woman's Life
Village Belles

The regulations of the Commercial Library for borrowing books seems amusing to li-

brarians today. The length of time books might be kept out was determined strictly by their size. "If it be a Folio, Quarto or Octavo two weeks; if a Duodecimo or small size, one week."¹³ Members were allowed to borrow two books at a time, "one volume, if it be a Folio, Quarto or Octavo, and one book or set of a Duodecimo or less size."¹⁴ The fine for overdue books, 6½ cents a day, was both high and difficult to compute.

The city and state governments looked upon the Commercial Library as a civic enterprise, because they frequently made generous donations to it. At the time of its founding the city government gave it \$500. Two years later it granted another \$500 and the following year still another \$500. In 1833 when the Commercial Library was incorporated the State Legislature gave it \$1,000, and in 1838 granted it \$1,000 annually for five years. We know from Librarian Jore's report that all city papers, periodicals and pamphlets were gratuitously delivered to the Commercial Library and that individuals had given it 155 books.

In spite of the substantial aid the Commercial Library received, its collection of about 6000 books was sold by the sheriff in 1842. Its failure seems to be due to the following factors:

1. Ill-will among the members, which was brought about by the intense animosity that existed between the Creoles and the Americans in the first half of the nineteenth century.
2. A severe yellow fever epidemic in 1841 that caused most of its members to leave the city.
3. Lack of support from the many transient residents of New Orleans, who looked upon the city, not as their home, but as a place of business and consequently took little interest in the promotion of educational institutions.

¹³ *Catalogue of the Books and Periodicals of the N. O. Commercial Library and Reading Room*, New Orleans, 1838, p. 9.

¹⁴ *Loc. cit.*

The books of the Commercial Library were bought by Benjamin Franklin French, whose earnest and continued efforts to create and develop a public library in his adopted city of New Orleans deserve a few biographical remarks.

He was born June 8, 1799, in Richmond, Virginia. There he received a classical education and studied law, which he abandoned on account of failing health. In 1830 he came to Louisiana, where he engaged in planting and commerce. In 1853 he retired from business and went to New York, where he died in 1877.

His first and lifelong interest was literary works. He contributed to periodicals and edited documents dealing with the early history of New Orleans. From 1846 to 1854 he published a four volume set, entitled *Historical Collections of Louisiana*. His other works were:

- Biographia Americana* (1826)
- Memoirs of Eminent Female Writers* (1827)
- Beauties of Byron, Scott and Moore* (1828)
- History and Progress of the Iron Trade of the United States* (1838)
- Historical Annals of North America* (1861)

He was a member of several state historical societies, of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and of the American Antiquarian Society.

After Mr. French had purchased the 6,000 books of the Commercial Library, he made them available to the subscribers of his reading room. Five years later on March 9, 1847, he sold them to Alvarez Fisk, who graciously asked him to present them to the City Council for public use.

In 1843 Abijah Fisk, Alvarez's brother, had willed to the city his house on Bourbon and Iberville Streets for the establishment and promotion of a public library. Since the City Council made no attempt to put his brother's bequest into effective operation, Alvarez Fisk hoped to bestir the city fathers, not so much with his gift of 6,000

books, but with Mr. French's scholarly ability and enthusiasm for establishing a public library. He therefore tactfully asked him to advise the City Council about the competent use of the gifts of Abijah and himself.

Mr. French immediately complied with this request. The very next day he wrote Mayor Crossman to give him definite and emphatic instructions for the systematizing of the new public library. His suggestions ranged from such important matters as appropriations of \$500 per annum by each municipality to such details as having "book cases in the gothic style."¹⁵ Mayor Crossman did not reply. Undaunted, Mr. French wrote him again on March 23, 1847, presenting to the new library the following books, paintings, manuscripts and "audio-visual" material, gifts of Alvarez Fisk and himself:

1. A brass mounted Refracting Telescope
2. A brass mounted Compound Microscope
3. A brass mounted Case of Mathematical Instruments
4. A brass mounted Case containing my Louisiana Herbarium 6 vols. fol.
- . . . my brass-mounted Reflecting Telescope
- A small collection of Southern shells and minerals. A manuscript history of the Revolution in England, 1688.
- A manuscript history of the proceedings of the First American Congress . . .
- Two fine paintings, and my large map of New Orleans. A copy of my Lives of Distinguished Americans . . . ¹⁶ and two copies of my Historical Collections of Louisiana.

Mayor Crossman in his reply expressed sincere thanks and enclosed copies of the resolutions passed by the three municipal councils appointing a Committee on Education to take the necessary measures.

¹⁵ *Correspondence of Benjamin Franklin French with the Mayor of the City of New Orleans and Alvarez Fisk, 1847, 1852, p. 8.*

¹⁶ *Ibid.* pp. 10-12.

There the matter rested for seven years. Mr. French frequently wrote pleading letters and donated many of his fine books to the inactive public library. In addition to these services, he persuaded several of his friends to make similar gifts.

Local newspapers tried to arouse the public, by complaining of the lethargy of the citizens and making various suggestions as to the effective use of the house and the collection of books left the city. One editorial proposed that the books be placed in the new building of the University of Louisiana and the "librarian be supplied, at small expense, from its professors or its students."¹⁷ At small expense, indeed!

Finally on May 16, 1853, the City Council entrusted to the Mechanics Society the Fisk Free and Public Library, which was the first public library in New Orleans. The rentals of the house left by Abijah Fisk was to be applied in defraying the cost of the library, which was placed in the new building of the Mechanics Society.

When we learn how this new edifice came into being, we realize the City Council's action aided not only the Fisk Library but also the Mechanics Society. The State Legislature had granted land in the business district of New Orleans to the Mechanics Society on condition that that organization erect a building "suitable for a library, lecture room and cabinet of natural history and mechanical inventions and . . . establish and maintain a library for the use of the Mechanics of New Orleans."¹⁸ The Fisk Library was of course free to all citizens.

The Mechanics Society needed more assistance than the City Council could provide. When it failed a few years later, the Fisk Library passed into the possession of the University of Louisiana (which later became Tulane University). In 1896 it was consolidated with the City Library to form the existing New Orleans Public Library.

ALVAREZ FISK, 1784-1853

AND

ABIJAH FISK, 1785-1845

The history of the New Orleans Public Library would not be complete without a few words about the Fisk brothers. For their benevolence they have received small recognition—a fact partly due to the lack of information about them.

The Fiskes or Fisks can trace their lineage as far back as 1208 in King John's reign and are descendants of Lord Symond Fisk of Manor of Stadhaugh at Lexfield, Suffolk County, England. Alvarez and Abijah Fisk's ancestors came to America in 1637 and settled at Watertown, Massachusetts. The grandparents of the Fisk brothers, Abijah and Elizabeth Upham Fisk, kept an inn at Waltham, Massachusetts.

Their father, Abijah Fisk, was "a respectable farmer, a man of great moral worth and patriotism, who served his country . . . during the revolutionary war of 1775."¹⁹ When he was only nineteen, he was one of the Minute-Men called to go to Lexington on the night of the midnight ride of Paul Revere. He subsequently enlisted three additional times. On the third occasion, July 3, 1779, he volunteered as a seaman on board the "Oliver Cromwell," where he was injured and taken prisoner. Seven weeks later he was exchanged and soon after discharged on account of his disability.

He returned to his farm at Waltham, Massachusetts, where in 1783 he married Alice Adams, daughter of John Adams of Lincoln, Massachusetts, and a cousin to the second president of the United States. She bore her husband eight children, of whom the first and second were respectively Alvarez (January 19, 1784) and Abijah (December 2, 1785).

When Abijah was seven, the family moved to the adjoining town of Weston. There he worked with his father in the field except for ten or twelve weeks of the winter season. During this time he attended public school

¹⁷ *De Bow's Review*, X, 1851, 235.

¹⁸ *Constitution, By-Laws and Rules of Order of the New Orleans Mechanics Society*, 1858, p. 4.

¹⁹ *New Orleans Commercial Bulletin*, "Obituary," December 29, 1845.

and received the only formal education he ever had. Leaving the farm when he was eighteen, he went to live in Boston, where he was employed as a salesman by a commercial house.

So efficiently did he perform his duties that only two years later he was offered a partnership in a large business firm. He accepted the proposition and was so successful that a few years later he separated from his partners to go in business for himself.

In 1820 Abijah Fisk had accumulated a capital of \$200,000 or more. But in 1822 he met with heavy reverses, which were caused for the most part by endorsements and the failure of eighty or ninety houses in Boston. He paid off all his small creditors in full and with interest and managed to give 81 cents in the dollar to his larger creditors. There was only one creditor who was not satisfied with this arrangement. He put Abijah "in prison and kept him there . . . for six months . . . but finding at length that his debtor could not be driven in that way, he came to terms and received what he might have received at first."²⁰

The little information we have concerns only Abijah. A visit to the Natchez Memorial Library, however, paid excellent dividends. There a letter of Mrs. Coral Fisk Hansen,²¹ Abijah's grand-niece, to Miss Carson, the librarian, revealed hitherto unpublished data. It states that Alvarez, Abijah and their younger brother, Stebbins, "were merchants in Boston in their young manhood and before 1820 . . . took cargoes of goods on flat boats, down the Ohio and Mississippi rivers to New Orleans and disposed of them there." So we assume that all three brothers suffered these heavy losses.

They had courage worthy of the highest praise. In spite of their crushing defeat, they began anew to plan immense commercial operations. Alvarez remained in New Orleans and Natchez; Stebbins sailed for

Europe and Abijah went to Havana and Rio de Janeiro, where he shipped sugar and coffee to New Orleans and European ports.

This is all we know about Stebbins except for the facts given below. Although they are irrelevant, they are too romantic to be omitted.

My mother, when a girl, was engaged to marry Stebbins Fiske. . . . My father was a warm friend of Stebbins Fiske, and when Fiske was called suddenly to New Orleans, just before the day set for the marriage, he left his betrothed, Maria Pickering, in charge of my father. The result might have been foreseen. . . . My mother and father fell in love with each other, and were married. . . . Fiske understood the situation, and forgave them both.²²

Stebbins never married. When he died in Nice, France, about 1837, he left \$5,000 to Mrs. Pickering. "It was the most delicate way in which he could leave some of his money so that his old sweetheart might get it."²³

Abijah also remained a bachelor. A few years before 1820 Alvarez married Eliza Wilkins, a Southern woman, who bore him four children—Stewart Wilkins, Alice, Edward and Isabel.

The introducing of coffee into the deep South by Alvarez and Abijah has resulted, as we well know, in the valuable trade which exists today between Rio de Janeiro and New Orleans. In addition to importing coffee and sugar, they became interested in cotton plantations in Louisiana and Mississippi. In 1830 Abijah joined Alvarez in New Orleans. Here they administered large and successful business enterprises.

Occasionally the Fisk brothers suffered heavy losses. From 1839 to 1840 Abijah lost \$400,000, of which about \$320,000 was in cotton. Alvarez likewise must have met reverses, because he mortgaged at an unknown

²⁰ *Loc. cit.*

²¹ Mrs. Hansen's grandfather, Sereno, the youngest brother of Alvarez and Abijah, was also a philanthropist. He gave considerable land to the town of Kenosha, Wisconsin.

²² George Francis Train, *My Life in Many States and in Foreign Lands*, New York, 1902, p. 105.

²³ *Op. cit.* p. 106.

date his beautiful home, "Choctaw," in Natchez and its contents for \$22,000 to his son, Stewart Wilkins. The mortgage was paid off and acknowledged on October 30, 1850.

In spite of these financial setbacks, Alvarez and Abijah were wealthy men. They shared a luxurious home in New Orleans on fashionable Esplanade Avenue and Bourbon Street and a country house, "Innismore," in Pass Christian, Mississippi. At their city residence they had twenty-five servants, a head butler, a seamstress and maids for the daughters of Alvarez, and coachman and coach. In Pass Christian they enjoyed a yacht.

Success, however, never blinded them to the needs of others. In one instance that we know of Abijah lost \$75,000 in assisting a family, for whom he felt a great sympathy. He left \$5,000 to one of his clerks "as a gratuity for his faithful services."²⁴ Alvarez freed about 200 or 300 of his slaves. He gave to Natchez land for the Natchez Institute, which "made its existence as a free school possible, at a time when such institutions were extremely rare."²⁵

Abijah died at the age of sixty-five in December, 1845. On November 16, 1853, Alvarez passed away at Araby Plantation

²⁴ *Fisk Free and Public Library of New Orleans*, "Historical Sketch, By-Laws," New Orleans, 1897, p. 5.

²⁵ *Natchez Democrat*, April 17, 1932, p. 4.

when he was seventy-two. Both brothers are buried in the family plot at Natchez.

The scarcity of material on the descendants of Alvarez is probably due to a large extent to the Civil War and the Reconstruction Period. We know that Stewart Wilkins Fisk graduated from Yale in 1840. He enlisted in the Civil War and was killed in 1862 at the battle of Murfreesboro. He and Edward remained bachelors. That is absolutely all we know about Edward. Alice married Robert Urquhart of the distinguished Urquhart family who owned the Concession sugar plantation. Isabel married an Englishman, W. S. Forge, who was also lost in the war. Whether Alice and Isabel had any children is not known. We learn from Mrs. Hansen's letter that after the war Isabel "disposed of her father's property or whatever she could lay her hands on to turn into cash, and went to France to live. Her mother is not buried at Natchez. So perhaps they went together."

Isabel and her mother made a wise decision. Lacking the protection of their husbands, they undoubtedly realized that they were unable to cope with the adverse conditions existing in the South during the Reconstruction Period and so, salvaging what they could, sailed for a less turbulent land.

Continued—Summer issue

Xavier University Library

SISTER MARIA CRISTELLA, S.B.S.

Librarian

On October 12, 1937, His Excellency, Archbishop Rummel of New Orleans, dedicated the beautiful Library Building of Xavier University, on Palmetto and Pine Streets. This structure—the work of local architects, Morgan and Bernard, was erected at a cost of \$120,000, for which sum a grant was accepted from the General Education Board of New York, and a Pennsylvania

Corporation of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament. Today the Library stands, together with other buildings which form the architectural unit of Xavier University, as a striking tribute to the heroic life-service of Reverend Mother Katherine Drexel, Foundress of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament for Indians and Colored People.

The Library Building, measuring approx-

imately 160 x 80 feet, provides three floors and four decks of stacks. It is well-lighted, fire-proof, and equipped with regulation furniture. There are two large reading rooms, a browsing room containing the Elementary Education Department's book material, the Morrell Memorial Art Collection, offices, Cataloging Department, bindery and foyer.

Over a thousand young Negro men and women daily enjoy the professional services of three Sister-Librarians, a full-time secretary, and over forty-five student attendants. The accession record of the book-stock now shows over 67,000 volumes responding to the needs of all university departments. Stress is laid on the titles in the Negro Literature collection. The French Language section has been made especially valuable by donations from the French Government and from Dr. Leon Baisier, Head of the French Department. An outstanding addition to the Rare Book collection is an exact copy of the *Book of Kells*, made by color-photographers from Berne, Switzerland. More than 425

magazines in English, French, and Spanish supplement the book stock.

Circulation records of last year show a total of 23,628 volumes at general circulation, and for last semester at reserve—9,643. Although borrowers' cards are issued only to those currently students or faculty members of the University, outside service is offered through Inter-library Loan, information given over telephone, the compilation of special bibliographies on request, and the use of library material within the library itself.

Xavier's Library, however, is older than its present English-Gothic structure: its early history coincides with that of the University itself, begun as a Teachers' College in 1925 within the walls of "Old Southern" on Magazine Street. In 1932, Xavier, equipped as a College of Liberal Arts and of Pharmacy, moved to its present site.

The library is open to the students and to the public, as mentioned above, from 8:00 a.m. until 10:00 p.m., Saturday 8:00 a.m. until noon.

New State Publications

Compiled by

WADE O. MARTIN, JR.

Secretary of State

The various state departments and agencies of Louisiana issue over 200 publications each year. Of these, about two-thirds are serials. It is the separate publications, published at irregular intervals, that frequently do not come to the attention of librarians. Therefore, this list of some of the separate publications of general interest issued since July 1951 has been prepared.

Four of the state departments issued small, informal publications to publicize the work of their departments:

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND IMMIGRATION. Louisiana's diversified agriculture. No paging.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY. Boost Louisiana. No paging.

STATE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE. Here is your profit in public welfare. No paging.

STATE HOSPITAL BOARD. This is Louisiana's charity hospital system and what it means to you. No paging.

New editions of the following were published:

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND IMMIGRATION. A brief discussion of the history of cotton, by H. B. Brown. 14th ed. 22 p.

- A brief discussion of the history of sugar cane, by W. G. Taggart and E. C. Simon. 12th ed. 20 p.
- Rice, compiled by J. Mitchell Jenkins. 14th ed. 24 p.

The first publications of the Displaced Persons Commission, appointed by the Governor in the fall of 1949, were released recently:

- DISPLACED PERSONS COMMISSION. Displaced persons in Louisiana and Mississippi by Rudolf Heberle and Dudley S. Hall. 93 p. (Cover-title: New Americans)
- Report of activities, September 1951. 14 p.

New compilations of laws published recently include:

- DEPARTMENT OF STATE. Non-profit corporation law. 147 p.
- Primary election law. 75 p.
 - Veterans' benefits. 58 p.
 - Workmen's compensation law. 64 p.

LAWs, STATUTES, ETC. Acts of the Legislature, extraordinary session of 1951. 54 p.

New serial publications are:

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND IMMIGRATION. *State Market Commission*. Fruit and vegetable report, No. 1—date, October 23, 1951—date. Daily, except Saturdays, Sundays and holidays. Sweet potato report, No. 1—date. Daily, except Saturdays, Sundays and holidays.

The above publications to some extent supersede the Daily Market Report, which ceased publication July 18, 1951.

STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION. Vocational education and special services newsletter, v. 1, No. 1—date; July 1951—date. Monthly.

To be used as a text in Louisiana schools is a new book on natural resources—oil, gas and minerals. It has photographs, illustrations and maps, and is for sale from the Bureau for 73 cents:

LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY. *Bureau of Educational Materials, Statistics and Research*. Louisiana: our treasure ground, by Richard Joel Russell. 149 p. (University Science Series).

New publications in the field of business and commerce are:

LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY. *College of Commerce. Division of Research*. A selected and annotated bibliography of recent sources of information on the industrialization of Louisiana, by George E. Henry. 15 p.

- Trust procedure in Louisiana banks, by Nestor R. Roos. 40 p. (Louisiana business bulletin, v. 13, No. 3)
- Why small retailers do or do not incorporate, by Harold Bierman, Jr., and David C. Townsend. 21 p.

Two new maps were prepared during the last few months:

DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAYS. Louisiana highways. Map.

GEOLOGICAL SURVEY. Oil and gas map of Louisiana, compilation and cartography by G. O. Coignet. Map.

In the field of health the following publications are noteworthy:

AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION. The availability of medical personnel in rural Louisiana, by Paul H. Price and Homer L. Hitt. 20 p. (Louisiana Bulletin No. 459)

STATE BOARD OF HEALTH. Survey of school health services in the city of New Orleans. 174 p.

- What shall I eat and why; essential food facts. 4th ed. 89 p.

Many bulletins are issued on agricultural subjects by the Agricultural Experiment Station, the Department of Agriculture and Immigration, and Louisiana State University, Division of Agricultural Extension. The "Semi-annual List of Public Documents"

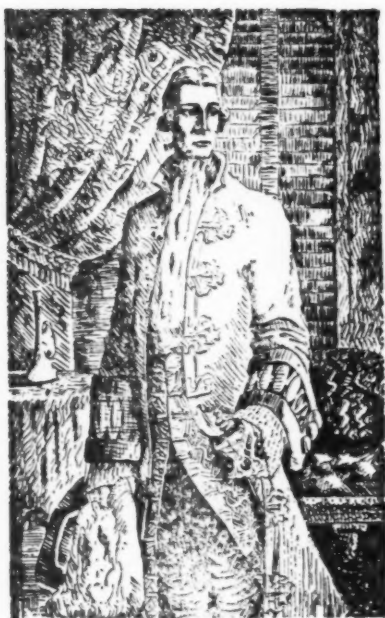
gives a complete listing of these publications. Special mention might be made of:

LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY. *Division of Agricultural Extension.* Origin and

growth of agricultural extension in Louisiana, 1860-1948; how it opened the road for progress in better farming and rural living, by Frederick W. Williamson. 345 p.

LSU Press: Books on Louisiana

ANNE WEEDMAN SMITH



Louisiana has long been intriguing and profitable to the fictionizers and romanticizers, and hardly a book season passes without the appearance of at least one new title having to do in some way with Louisiana.

Well aware of this appeal of Louisiana, the Louisiana State University Press since its inception in 1931 has been dedicated to increasing the store of regional literature. However, it has proceeded on the assumption that Louisiana's heritage is rich enough to be set down without imaginative embellishments, and has published only factual books.

Plans for the present and forthcoming seasons reveal at least four new Louisiana

titles bearing the LSU Press imprint. They are all based on the actual evidence of either history or sociology.

One of these is a biography of one of the earliest promoters of Louisiana. Entitled "Cavalier in the Wilderness: The Story of the Explorer and Trader, Louis Juchereau de St. Denis," it is set for March 20 publication. The author is Ross Phares.

St. Denis was the founder of Natchitoches; he came to New France with the Iberville-Bienville party which founded New Orleans, and he stayed to become one of the most controversial figures of the frontier.

He early became a thorn in the flesh of the neighboring Spaniards and at his death the Spanish governor is said to have exclaimed, "Thank God; now we can breathe easier."

Despite the undercurrent conflict between the French and Spanish, however, St. Denis succeeded in turning his rivals into customers for the commercial colony of Louisiana and in winning a bride from the Spanish family whose official business it was to keep him out of Mexico.

For nearly a quarter of a century he preserved peace and prosperity in the Louisiana colony. He was so able as an Indian fighter that Louisiana suffered comparatively little from savage attacks, and because he was influential with the Indians he also kept the Spaniards at bay.

Prejudices of the period often seeped through into records, and the historical figure of St. Denis has sometimes been distorted by inconsistencies. In this biography,

however, he emerges as a character of consistently fixed purposes and principles.

The author is chairman of the division of languages and literature and professor of English at East Texas Baptist College in Marshall. He is familiar with the territory in which this story is set, for he was born in Louisiana, went to school in Mexico, and now lives in Texas.

Just published by the Press was "The Golden Age of the New Orleans Theater," by John S. Kendall, which appeared in late January. This is the story of the English-language drama in New Orleans and is written for the general reader as well as the scholar and historian.

The period covered by the book extends from the early 1800's into the twentieth century, though the "golden age" was in its decline about 1880, when changing economic conditions necessitated the abandonment of the old stock company system. The peripatetic theatrical organization still characteristic of theatrical activities was substituted for stock companies at that time.

The author was for thirty years a reporter on the old New Orleans *Picayune* and he drew heavily on his own experience for the material in this book. He was thrown into intimate contact with many of the veterans of the stage during his newspaper career and from them he also learned much about the men and women of the early theater which has not been printed before.

His book includes many anecdotes about theater people as well as a detailed chronicling of date and names of plays and actors. Mr. Kendall is emeritus professor of Spanish at Tulane University. As a reporter he served as war correspondent in the Spanish-American war and during revolutions in Cuba and Nicaragua.

"The People of Louisiana" is scheduled for early March release by the Press. The product of twenty years of painstaking study

and research on the part of two sociologists, the book presents an array of verified and basic facts about Louisiana's most valuable resource—her people.

The authors are T. Lynn Smith and Homer L. Hitt. Dr. Smith is a former member of the LSU sociology faculty and is now teaching at the University of Florida. Dr. Hitt is head of the LSU sociology department.

Various factors concerning the state's population are analyzed and interpreted by the writers. These include the number and distribution of inhabitants, their racial stocks, national origins, ages, sex proportion, marital condition, educational status, occupations, and religious affiliations. Two principal factors determining the number of people and their distribution—rates of reproduction and of death—are studied.

Currents of migration within the state are described, and the growth of population in Louisiana and its trends are also considered.

The material included in this book is valuable for public policy and social planning, for many governmental projects, such as highways, old age benefits, and schools, rely on such information. The book is based on census reports and previous population studies by the authors and others.

Now in the process of manufacture is the fourth Louisiana book planned by the Press. It is a biography of General James Longstreet and will be issued in the late fall. The only complete treatment of the life of Longstreet, the book is divided into two parts. The story of Longstreet's military career was written by the late Col. D. B. Hay and that of his civilian life—the most controversial period in his life—was authored by T. R. Hay.

Even in manuscript form, this book has already been cited in another book. Ben Ames Williams, who is writing a novel based on Longstreet's life, acknowledged the value of material found in the University Press book.

Federal Legislation of Interest to Librarians

By SALLIE FARRELL, *Chairman*
Federal Relations Committee, L. L. A.

The Library Services Bill has a good chance for passage, provided the "folks back home" do their part, according to reports received from the Washington Office of the American Library Association.

As one of the "folks back home," *your* part includes: (1) writing your U. S. representative and U. S. senators telling them of your interest and urging their support of the bill; (2) getting at least one library-minded layman to write to his congressman.

In writing to the senators refer to the Library Services Bill, S.1452. In letters to representatives, you need refer only to the

title of the bill—Library Services Bill—since eight identical bills have been introduced.

The purpose of the bill is to stimulate states to strengthen existing but inadequate services and to extend library services to primarily rural areas; to provide means for studying effective methods of extending service to rural areas; and to make available to children and adults library materials with which to entertain, educate, and inform themselves continuously for more effective and profitable living.

As of this date (March 12) this is the status of the legislation. The Senate bill, S.1452, was reported favorably by the Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare during the first session of Congress. It is now ready to be scheduled for debate on the floor of the Senate.

The House bills have been referred to the House Committee on Education and Labor and it is hoped that by the time this Bulletin appears the bill will have been reported favorably by the Committee.

For additional information about the Library Services Bill please see the *ALA Bulletin* for January 1952, pages 21-24, which urges immediate passage, summarizes the bill, points out the need for such legislation, etc.

The Federal Relations Committee has been concerned also with the Defense Housing and Community Facilities and Services Act of 1951. Of broad scope, this law provides housing and other facilities in those areas designated as critical by the Housing and Home Finance Agency and the director of the Office of Defense Mobilization. Criti-

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cal areas are those vitally affected by a large influx of defense workers or military personnel.

According to the ALA Washington Office, libraries are included in the act with reservations—they can qualify for facilities but can receive no money for personnel.

In Louisiana three areas have been designated as critical and can qualify for funds under the act. They are the Lake Charles, Camp Polk (Vernon and Beauregard parishes), and Alexandria areas.

A case for these critical areas, justifying their requests for federal funds, was made for use of the ALA Washington Office by the Louisiana Committee chairman in cooperation with local authorities.

A subcommittee is now considering the supplemental appropriations to the Housing and Home Finance Agency to implement the Defense Housing and Community Facilities and Services Act. Let us hope that money will be earmarked for library facilities!

Other pending legislation of interest to librarians is the Celler Bill, H. R. 4059, which repeals the manufacturing clause in

the Copyright Law. The ALA Book Acquisitions Committee strongly urges support of the bill because it is an important step toward improving our international copyright relations. (For additional information about the bill read L. Quincy Mumford's article on "The History of Copyright" in the *ALA Bulletin*, February 1952, pages 45-47.) Hearings have been held on the Celler Bill with a member of the ALA Federal Relations Committee testifying for it.

The ALA Washington Office reports that college and university librarians are seriously concerned over the possibility that the Veterans Bill, as finally approved, will not contain funds for the purchase of textbooks. Both the Association of College and Reference Libraries and the ALA are urging that such funds be included because college and university library book budgets would otherwise be seriously handicapped. All Librarians consulted are of the opinion that such a cut would force libraries to make major changes in book-buying policies, and that such changes would jeopardize the service rendered to all students.

People and Places

Edited by

LOLA COOPER

Director of Extension, East Baton Rouge
Parish Library

Elizabeth Cammack, librarian, *Iberia Parish Library, New Iberia*, reports that the contract has been let on a new \$30,000.00 building to house the *Jeanerette Branch* of the *Iberia Parish Library*. The building will house about 9,000 books.

The *Tioga Branch* of the *Rapides Parish Library* moved into its new home in February. The *Tioga V. F. W.* built a room especially for the library in their new home and decorated it to the librarian's specifications. The walls are a sunny yellow and the shelving and furniture are painted "Pampas Green," with a bright note provided by a

cherry red lining on the shelves. According to *Emily Reed*, librarian, it makes a most attractive branch and the children particularly are showing their appreciation by increased usage of the library which has almost swamped the branch assistant.

The *St. Tammany Parish Library* announces the opening of the *Branch Library* for Negroes on Friday, January 11, 1952, in *Slidell* at the Parish Training School Auditorium.

The *Waverly Branch* of the *Madison Parish Library* was moved on January 3rd from a small corner in the Waverly store to a

large attractive room in the new modern Waverly School building. Open house was held in the Branch on January 13th. Circulation has tripled and quadrupled since the move was made.

The trustees of *Richland Parish Library* were hosts to the Trustees Association of the Fifth Congressional District in Rayville on February 22nd. After the conference in the Court House, the guests were served coffee in the Library. Guests attended from *Cataboula*, *Madison*, *Morehouse*, *Ouachita*, *Richland*, and *Winn* parishes. At the business session a resolution asking for the support of the newly elected legislators and governor for the support of an appropriation for a home for the *State Library* was passed unanimously. In January, *Richland Parish Library* lost one of its most useful and beloved members, *Mrs. Lena Lee*, who had been ill for several months before her death on January 20th. She was a member of the bookmobile staff.

There are three brides on the *New Orleans Public Library* staff. *Ruth Moor* is now *Mrs. Scott Robbins*; *Mary Bradford* is *Mrs. Chester Lee*, and *Marie Louise Ponceti* is *Mrs. Benjamin Prine*. Newcomers to the staff include *Marie Louise Arnoult*, Library Assistant at the *Latter Branch Library*; *Mrs. Thelma Kingma*, Library Assistant in the Order Department; *Mrs. Edith Stenhouse*, Library Assistant at the *Algiers Branch*; and *Mrs. Jean Kennedy Brown*, Library Assistant at the Main Library. *Mr. Richard B. Allen* has been employed to catalog the collection of jazz recordings presented to the library by *Dr. Edmond Souchon*. *Mrs. Elva Wilson* has resigned from the staff, due to the transfer of her residence to *DeRidder*. *Mrs. Alice V. Westfeldt* returned to the Information Desk staff March 1, after five months in France. During her absence her place was taken by *Mrs. Mary Steffins*. *Carmel Kuebel*, librarian of the *Blind Department*, attended the National Regional Conference, Librarians for the Blind, at the Library of Congress in November. She was later named Woman of the Week by Radio

Station WNOE. In January, *John Hall Jacobs*, librarian, *New Orleans Public Library*, made a survey of the *Dallas Public Library*, upon the invitation of the Friends of the Dallas Library. He shared the responsibility with *Dr. Joseph W. Wheeler*, formerly librarian of the *Enoch Pratt Library* in Baltimore. The results of their survey are to be used in conjunction with a proposed new main library building and with administrative streamlining for existing staff and facilities.

With the cooperation of the Shreveport Geological Society and the Ark-La-Tex Geophysical Society, *Shreve Memorial Library*, *Shreveport*, has made a good start on a technical Petroleum Library. More than a thousand items have already been placed in the new department. The men of the two societies are assisting in securing bulletins and magazines to complete the files. They are also buying some new books and appropriating money for binding. For their own records they are photostating the library's subject catalog cards on Geology, Petroleum, and Mines and Mining.

At the *Lafourche Parish Library*, *Mrs. R. J. Bernard*, the former *Beth Steiner*, has resigned as headquarters assistant to move to *Donaldsonville*, where her husband is employed. *Mrs. Bernard* began working in the *Thibodaux Branch Library* when the demonstration library was being established five years ago. She was replaced on March 1, by *Estelle Virginia St. Julien* of Broussard, La.

On January 1, 1952, *Mrs. Rubie Hanks* began her duties as Regional Librarian of *Winn* and *Cataboula Parish Libraries*. *Mrs. Cecile B. Husbands* was appointed Assistant Librarian of *Cataboula Parish*.

Mattie Sue Mounce, formerly Assistant Reference Librarian, *Louisiana State Library*, is now doing reference work at the *El Paso Public Library*, El Paso, Texas. Replacing her at the *State Library* is *Mrs. Elliott Hardaway*, whose husband is a member of the *L. S. U. Library* staff.

On January 26, 1952, *Mr. John Winters*, a member of the *Louisiana Polytechnic In-*



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stitute faculty in the Department of Social Sciences and *Frances Locke*, Circulation Librarian, Louisiana Tech, were married in *Asbdown, Arkansas*.

Mrs. Louise Gray Lemert left her work as Assistant Librarian and is now devoting herself to full-time teaching at the *North-east Louisiana State College, Monroe*. She has four classes in English and three in Books and Libraries. *Mrs. Kitty McCoy Liner*, who majored in speech and took undergraduate work in library science at *L. S. U.*, was appointed to serve on the library staff. *Mrs. Joyce Stringer Hazelton*, who served as library clerk in the College Library last year, resigned to accompany her husband to *Spokane, Washington*. Her position was filled by appointment of *Geraldine Vascocu*, who was an honor graduate from *Ouachita Parish High School* in 1951. *Mary Clay*, librarian, *Northeast Louisiana State College*, was given a trip to the International Conference of Altrusa Clubs at *White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia*, in July, 1951, by the *Monroe Club*. Following the Altrusa Convention, she spent the weekend visiting the libraries of *Washington* and *Lee* and *Virginia Military Institute* at *Lexington* and the *University of Virginia Library* at *Charlottesville*, as well as historic homes and museums in the two communities. *Isabel Monroe*, formerly Associate Editor of the *Standard Catalog* series and other publications of the *H. W. Wilson Co.*, and *Kate Monro*, author of several books in the field of secretarial work and business English, are house guests of *Mary Clay* this Spring. The sisters have used the College Library in research for a book in process on the handicapped and an index to European painting. The *Louisiana State Library* has been of assistance through the loan of additional books with reproductions of foreign paintings.

Mrs. Shirley Knowles Stephenson, a graduate of the *L. S. U. Library School* in the class of 1940, was appointed instructor in the *Library School* at the opening of the 1951-52 session to teach courses formerly

taught by *Mildred Harrington* and *Sarah Jones*. *Mrs. Stephenson* has been guest reviewer recently on programs sponsored by the *Parish Libraries* in *Rapides* and *Washington*. *Sarah Jones*, Field Worker, Extension Division, *Louisiana State Library*, resigned as part-time assistant professor from the faculty of the *Library School* at the close of the 1950-51 session. *Miss Jones* has served as the instructor in the course of *County* and *Regional Libraries* since the resignation of *Mrs. Ella Aldrich Schwing*.

Mrs. Florinell F. Morton, Director, *L. S. U. Library School*, attended the meeting of the Association of Colleges of Teacher Education held in *Chicago*, February 21-23, as chairman of the Board of Education for Librarianship of the American Library Association. *Mrs. Morton* presented to the Committee on Studies and Standards of the AACTE newly developed Standards for the Evaluation of Undergraduate Programs for the Preparation of School Librarians and presided over a panel discussion of this subject at one of the group meetings on February 23rd. *Mrs. Morton* is chairman of the Southwestern Library Association. On the committee, representing the host country for the November conference of SWLA, is an *L. S. U. Library School* alumnus, *Pedro Zamora '48*, a member of the staff of the *Mexico City College Library*.

Katherine Kilbourne Thomas is an instructor in the department of Books and Libraries at *L. S. U.*, succeeding *Mrs. Shirley K. Stephenson*.

Sue Hefley, Director, *Materials Bureau, Webster Parish School Board*, has been nominated for membership on the Executive Board of the American Library Association.

Attending the Midwinter Conference of the American Library Association were *Es-sae M. Culver*, *Louisiana State Library*; *Mr. Guy R. Lyle* and *Mr. Andrew Eaton*, Director and Associate Director respectively, *L. S. U. Library*; *Mrs. Florinell F. Morton* and *Norris McClellan*, *L. S. U. Library School*; *Yvonne Toups*, Librarian, *Francis T. Nicholls Junior College* of *L. S. U.*, Thi-

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bodaux; Ruth Nesom, librarian, Houma High School; Bess Vaughn, Shreve Memorial Library, Shreveport; and Mr. John Hall Jacobs, librarian, New Orleans Public Library.

A joint meeting of the Baton Rouge and New Orleans Library Clubs and the Louisiana Chapter of Special Libraries Association, was held on February 9 at the U. S. D. A. Southern Regional Research Laboratory. The program, planned by Mrs. Dorothy Beckmeyer Skan, included a panel discussion on Education for Special Librarianship led by Janet Riley. Representing respectively the fields of law, chemistry, medicine, and business were Mr. Leonard Oppenheim, Librarian, Tulane Law School; Lois Skinner, librarian, Ethyl Corporation; Mary Louise Marshall, librarian, Tulane Medical School; and Harriet Lemann, Reference Librarian, Thomas J. Cunningham Library, International House. Representing the field of professional library education on the panel was Mrs. Florinell F. Morton, Director, Library School, L. S. U.

W. Carroll Bennett, formerly of Mansfield, La., and at one time a member of the L. S. U. Library Staff, is assistant order librarian at the University of Texas.

Ethel Saucier, formerly of the L. S. U. Nursing Education Library, is Librarian, Department of Social Security, Olympia, Washington.

Vivian Maddox, formerly librarian, Natchitoches Parish Library, describes the new Garland County (Arkansas) Library building in the September-October issue of Library Bureau's THE PIONEER.

Mrs. Lucille T. Carnahan, Library Science Instructor at Northwestern State College, is serving on the membership committee of the A. L. A. Library Education Division. Mrs. Carnahan urges everyone who is interested in trends in library education to indicate that interest by selecting Library

Education for divisional membership in A. L. A.

Agnes Clark, librarian at Natchitoches High School, received the Modisette Award for the Natchitoches High School Library at the L. E. A. convention in Shreveport.

Irma Spillman, librarian of Vinton High School, has built a new home in Vinton.

Ruth Clark, librarian of Lake Charles High School, was recently elected a member of the executive council of the Louisiana Education Association from the Seventh District.

Ruby Moore, librarian of Fair Park High School in Shreveport, gave a most interesting discussion on Audio-Visual materials to the school librarians of Calcasieu Parish in November.

Jane Ellen Carstens was a student in the Columbia University School of Library Service last Fall. She returned to Southwestern Louisiana Institute, Lafayette, at the beginning of the Spring semester, where she is teaching courses in library science while Olive Gehring is on leave.

J. Vernon Jordan, who received his B.S. in Library Science from L. S. U. last Spring, is in the army now and is stationed at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri.

Frances Smith Evans is librarian at the Springhill Elementary School. Last year she served as librarian at the LaGrange High School, replacing Dorothy Moses McFatter, who was on leave of absence. Dorothy is back at LaGrange this year.

The Natchitoches Parish Schools enjoyed a visit from Mrs. Lena de Grummond, School Library Supervisor. Mrs. DeGrummond spent several days in the parish just before the Christmas holidays.

Patsy Eason and Sallie Harper, who were graduated from Northwestern State College in January, have accepted school library positions. Patsy is librarian at the Jena High School, and Sallie is librarian at the Collinston High School.



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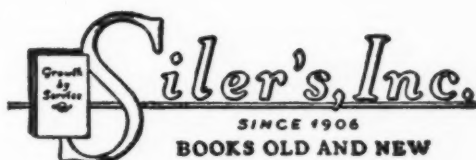
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Winter Meeting Held at Southern Regional Research Laboratory

By

DORIS B. DANTIN, *Commerce Librarian,*
L. S. U.

The winter meeting of the Louisiana Chapter of the Special Libraries Association was held at the Southern Association was held at the Southern Regional Research Laboratory in New Orleans, February 9. This year for the first time the meeting was held in conjunction with the annual Baton Rouge-New Orleans Library Club joint meeting. It was a great success and it is hoped that it might be continued in the future.

The program was an especially interesting one and consisted of a panel discussion on *Education and Preparation for Librarianship in Various Subject Fields* and an illustrated talk on Paraguay by Dr. K. S. Markley of the Southern Regional Research Laboratory. A tea and a chance to renew library friendships followed the program. The hostess, Mrs. Dorothy B. Skau, Louisiana Chapter Vice-president, showed various interested members around the laboratory after the meeting.

The panel proved to be lively and interesting. Participants included Miss Lois Skinner, Ethyl Corporation; Mr. Leonard Oppenheim, Tulane University Law School; Miss Harriet Lemann, International House; Miss Isabelle Snodgrass, Newcomb College Music Library; Miss Mary Louise Marshall, Tulane Medical Library; Mrs. Florrinell Morton, LSU Library School; and Miss Janet Riley, Loyola University Law School who acted as moderator. Miss Riley opened the discussion by giving some of the background of the idea for the panel. She emphasized the fact that there are many facets to the problem and each group that discusses it naturally thinks their solution is best. The main points of the problem seem

to be just what the qualifications of a special librarian must be and how those requirements can best be met. Miss Riley pointed out that all libraries, even special ones, have certain things in common, but that it is after this common training is obtained that the difficulties arise. Should the librarian be trained in library work as well as a specific subject or might one of the types of training be omitted and if so, which one?

Lois Skinner gave the first talk. She presented the view that it was desirable for the librarian to have both subjective and library training but if a choice must be made that the former would be the most useful. She pointed out that it would be easier to acquire library training on the job than scientific knowledge for instance, since the field is not quite so extensive. She felt that a chemist with some library training could give greater service particularly in literature searching and translations than a librarian with a smattering of chemistry. It was her opinion also that such a librarian could command a better salary because she would be on an equal footing with her chemist colleagues—usually better paid than librarians—and would have to be paid about the same as they.

Mr. Leonard Oppenheim followed Miss Skinner. He, too, was the opinion that a subject specialist could acquire library training on the job and would be more efficient than a librarian trying to learn law on the job. He and Miss Skinner both admitted that it might not be necessary to have degrees in either law or chemistry but that an extensive knowledge of the literature and

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vocabulary was imperative. Mr. Oppenheim said that he also felt that the amount and kind of training required varied with the size of the library; small and mediumsize ones could be administered by a librarian with a faculty member to supervise book purchases, reference and bibliographic work, while the large library should have a subject specialist with a library-trained assistant. He also felt that a librarian with a law degree could command a better salary than a librarian without specialized training.

Miss Harriet Lemann was the third speaker and took an opposing view from the first two. She felt that in the business world that library techniques and philosophy were very important and that the subject specialties could be acquired on the job; that an extensive general background was imperative. A major in economics or business administration would be helpful but is not as essential as a firm grounding in library techniques, good foreign language knowledge, and wide general knowledge. If specialized training is taken then bibliography should be concentrated on. She pointed out that service is the most important factor in a business library. The library should be organized to supply information as quickly, cheaply, and accurately as possible. Time is an important element; long time-consuming research projects are rare.

Following Miss Lemann, Miss Isabelle Snodgrass presented the case for the music libraries. She agreed with the first two speakers that specialized training was most desirable and that library techniques could be picked up on the job. She felt that training in music theory was very important as well as extensive knowledge of music bibliography and foreign languages.

The fifth speaker, Miss Mary Louise Marshall, sided with Miss Lemann in that she considered thorough mastery of Library techniques more desirable than medical knowledge. She admitted that a knowledge of medical terms and medical bibliography was essential but pointed out that it could be acquired on the job. She stated that she

felt that there were certain techniques peculiar to medical libraries that should be learned and went on to explain in detail the internship plan set up by the Medical Library Association to train librarians in these specialized techniques.

Mrs. Florrinell Morton concluded the formal talks. She pointed out the difficulty that library schools were experiencing in setting up programs to suit the needs of students planning to enter the special library field. The major problem is the determination of a program that would be suitable to all sorts of special libraries for obviously there would rarely be sufficient students to justify concentration on one particular kind of special library. Also, if there were enough students interested in business libraries for instance, would there be enough jobs available to place all the students of an average size class? Mrs. Morton pointed out that such intensive specialization made job opportunities limited for the student and that such strict specialization was not possible until there were enough jobs to justify such courses. She suggested that the best solution at present was to encourage students in various subject fields other than the traditional history and English to enter the library profession. All panel members more or less agreed that graduate study in the specialty while desirable, was not absolutely essential for a special librarian and that library training substituted for graduate study would make a very useful combination.

A rather spirited discussion from the floor followed the formal talks.

Following the panel discussion, Dr. K. S. Markley of the Southern Regional Research Laboratory staff showed colored slides taken during his recent stay in Paraguay. Dressed in the costume of a typical Paraguayan gaucho, Dr. Markley gave a short prefatory talk on Paraguay then proceeded with the pictures.

The meeting was concluded with a tea and an exhibit of some of the things which Dr. Markley had brought back from Paraguay.

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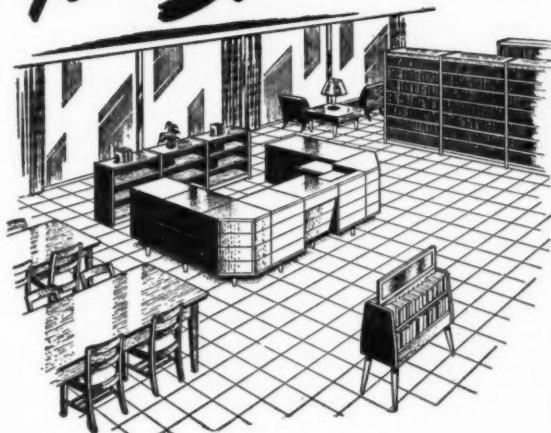
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Alpha Beta Alpha National Library Science Fraternity Holds First Biennial Convention

The first biennial convention of Alpha Beta Alpha, national undergraduate library science fraternity, was held on the campus of Northwestern State College, Natchitoches, Louisiana, on March 15-16, with Alpha Chapter as host.

The highlight of the convention was the banquet on Saturday night, at which the national president, Miss Jo Ann Scott of Beta Chapter, presided. Mr. Edmon Low, Director of Libraries at Oklahoma A. and M. and President of the Southwestern Library Association, brought greetings from Southwestern. There followed a panel discussion, "Librarianship-A Future," led by Mrs. Florinell Morton, Director of the L. S. U. Library School and an honorary member of Alpha Beta Alpha. The members of the panel were Miss Essae Culver, Louisiana State Librarian; Miss Sue Hefley, School Library Supervisor of Webster Parish; Mr. Guy Lyle, Director of Libraries at L. S. U.; Mr. W. Dosite Postell, Librarian of the L. S. U. School of Medicine; Major Robert W. Severance, Director of Publications, HRRS, U. S. Air Force, San Antonio; and Dr. Garland F. Taylor, Director of Libraries at Tulane University. Following the panel discussion, Mr. James Aswell, novelist and short story writer of New York and Natchitoches, spoke on "Authors, Too, Are People."

Other convention speakers were Miss Mar-

garet Girder, Library Supervisor of the San Francisco Unified School District, who spoke on "Librarianship-A Challenge"; Mrs. Doris Gates (Hall), author and editor of juvenile books, Carmel, California, who gave an address, "For Readers Only" and told one of Carl Sandburg's stories; and Mr. Grieg Aspnes, Research Librarian and Publicity Director of the Brown and Bigelow Firm who spoke on "Opportunities in Special Libraries."

At the conclusion of the dinner meeting on Sunday, new national officers were elected: President, Miss Ann Baird of Beta Chapter, Mississippi State College for Women; Vice-President, Miss Mary Rose Clipp of Gamma Chapter, Indiana State Teachers College; Treasurer, Miss Millicent Thompson of Alpha Chapter, Northwestern State College of Louisiana; Executive Secretary, Dr. Eugene P. Watson of Alpha Chapter.

A tour of historic Natchitoches and points of interest on Cane River occupied the afternoon. An executive session that night concluded the two-day convention.

One hundred one people attended the convention. The official delegates were: Claire Lucius of Alpha Chapter, Mary June Murphree of Beta and Maryann Peters of Gamma.

1951 Literary Award To Mr. Robert Tallant

Mr. Eugene Watson, Chairman, LLA Committee for the Literary Award, announced

the 1951 winner at the annual convention in Shreveport. The winner was presented with an attractive plaque. The illustrator of the book, Mr. John C. Chase, cartoonist of the *New Orleans States*, was presented to the group, and made a brief talk.

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"I was deeply gratified to learn that Robert Tallant's *The Pirate Lafitte and the Battle of New Orleans* had won the annual Louisiana Library Association award. I understand that this is a particularly noteworthy victory for Robert Tallant in that it is the first book for children ever to be singled out for the distinction. We here at Random House are very proud of our Landmark Series, and are happy to know that you evidently agree with us that Robert Tallant's book is one of the best written and most interesting books in the group.

"As a result of your award, we have prepared a special band to go around every copy of *The Pirate Lafitte and the Battle of New Orleans*, and I am enclosing a copy of that band herewith. We have also sent out a publicity note to every paper in the country telling about the honor conferred upon Mr. Tallant."

Book Reviews

The Southwest in Children's Books: a bibliography; edited by Mildred P. Harrington. Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University Press, c1952. 124 p. \$2.50.

The Southwest in Children's Books was compiled with Mildred P. Harrington, former professor in the Library School of the Louisiana State University, as editor-in-chief of groups of librarians from the six Southwestern states. This is a much needed bibliographical tool for librarians working with children and young people in elementary and junior high schools as well as in public libraries. It lists books brought out by the major publishers and the small regional and university presses, as well as pertinent state documents and departmental bulletins.

In the preface, Miss Harrington says that the selection of the books for this bibliography has been "based on the value of the books with regard to each particular state." Although selective, the bibliography never-

theless forms an excellent checklist for school and public libraries to use for current purchases in building a regional collection. It is also useful as a list against which to check when worn or slow-moving material is being considered for discard, for about one-fourth of the items are "o.p." and in the case of titles published by regional presses, those probably will never again be in print.

This new bibliography is an indispensable supplement to the *Children's Catalog* for material on the Southwestern states because less than a fourth of its entries are listed in the 1951 *Children's Catalog*, and still fewer titles are brought out therein, under state or other subject headings.

Annotated titles pertaining to each state, are listed alphabetically by author in a standard bibliographical pattern which includes title, publisher, date and price. Reading level is also shown, and follows closely, with very few differences, the national level as indicated in the *Children's Catalog*.

Also included, as a part of the bibliographical entry, is a notation as to whether the book is primarily a reference book, fiction, or useful for its pictorial aspects, or, if starred, that the title was included because of style of writing, characterization or wealth of regional material. The annotations are more descriptive of the text than critically evaluative.

The index, which comprises half of the book, is arranged alphabetically by author, title and subject. Subject headings are in italics and reveal clearly the wide range and the like and diverse interests and cultures of the various states.

There are few cross references in the index. For instance, there is no subject entry under either "Snakes" or "Reptiles" (a very popular subject with children) referring the user to "Desert Flora and Fauna" where such books are listed. There is a heading under "Pirogues"—a word very familiar in the transportation vernacular of Louisiana—but there is no reference to its use from "Boats" or "Canoes." There is a general heading "Indians" under which many titles

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are listed; there are also entries under "Cherokee Indians," "Navajo Indians" and other tribes, but there is no *see also* reference from the general to the specific in the headings listed.

These are grave discrepancies in a bibliographical index; it is to be hoped that in subsequent editions of the bibliography that this error will be remedied.

The format and binding are very good and most acceptable. It is printed double columns to the page in clear, easily read type; each entry of the bibliography is in "caps" with a hanging indentation which makes it stand out clearly.

The Southwest in Children's Books is a first purchase for all public and school libraries in the Southwest; it is recommended for reference shelves for all public and school libraries.

CECILE J. RITTER
Jefferson Parish Library

Loyola Courses in Library Science

Loyola University Library is now offering courses in Library Science. These courses began in the summer of 1951 and continued on the Saturdays during the winter. We plan to offer at least two hours this summer.

The content of the courses in school librarianship offered at Loyola is designed to provide training essential to the operation of a modern school library. The program is planned to make it possible for teacher-librarians to satisfy the requirement of eighteen semester hours established by the Southern Association for teacher-librarians, and for the principals and teachers to study the relationship of the library to the school.

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